individual/departments have already been sent to the Government, further investigation of the case is going on and exact nature of the lapses on the part of various departments and officials will be clear only after this part of investigation is completed. Efforts are being made by CBI to complete this work also at the earliest. Details can be given after completion of investigation.

Voluntary retirement scheme, in Textile Industry

*110. SHRI MUKESH R. PATEL:
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the progress made in the implementation of Voluntary Retirement Scheme in Textile industry;

(b) the details thereof;

(c) whether his Ministry has received the request from the State Government of Maharashtra to reimburse the amount under NRF Scheme; and

(d) if so, by when it will be reimbursed?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) The progress of implementation of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) in the textile undertakings under the Ministry of Textiles, is as follows:

Name of Undertaking	No. of worker's who availed VRS upto 31.3.97
National Textile Corporation Ltd. & its subsidiaries	46,217
British India Corporation Ltd. (BIC)	1099
Elgin Mills Company Ltd.*	3881
Cawnpore Textile Ltd.*	847

(* BIC subsidiaries)

(c) and (d) The State Government of Maharashtra has requested Ministry of Industry for assistance of Rs. 74.83 crores from the National Renewal Fund (NRF) for payment of gratuity and compensation under VRS to the staff of Maharashtra State Textile Corporation Ltd. and the Textile Corporation of Marathwada Ltd.

According to Ministry of Industry, assistance from the NRF is presently restricted to the VRS in Central PSUs and of the scheme of retraining and counselling.

Telephone connections in Post Offices and Village Panchayats in Gujarat

*111. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Post Offices in Gujarat where telephone connections are yet to be provided; and

(b) the number of Panchayats where no telephone connection with STP facility has been provided so far and the steps being taken by Government for installa tion of telephones with STD facility in all the Panchayats in the State?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VAR-MA): (a) 6446 number of Post Offices in Gujarat are not having telephone facilities.

(b) There are total 13,510 Gram Panchayats in Gujarat. So facility is available in 3879 Panchayats of Gujarat as on 30th June, 1997. However 12,456 Gram Panchayats in Gujarat have been provided with Village Public Telephones (VPTs) facilities and these are without STD as on 30th June, 1997- Government is having plan to provide STD facilities to all Exchanges during IXth plan period from where STD can be provided on demand.

Amount spent on National Highway No. 5

*112. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the "Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent so far on the four-laning of the Cuttack-Bhubaneswar section of the National Highway No. 5;

(b) the progress made in the construction work; and

(c) the target date fixed for the completion of the four-laning project?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) The amount spent is approximately Rs. 87.58 crores upto June, 1997;

(b) About 30% upto June, 1997;

(c) December, 1999.

Guidelines for construction of houses under Indira Awas Yojana

*113. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to alter the terms of finances of the Indira Awas Yojana;

(b) if so, whether such changes have been effected;

(c) whether any new guidelines have been issued for the technology to be used for construction of houses under the Yojana; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. YERANNAIDU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) In view of (a) above, question does not arise.

(c) and (d) As per Indira Awas Yojana guidelines and instructions issued from time to time, efforts should be made to utilise to the maximum extent local materials, cost effective techniques and low cost technologies developed by various institutions.

Violation of Indian Air-space

*114. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistani Air Force planes have of late been violating Indian air space more frequently;

(b) the details of such air-violations during the last six months and the comparative figures and details for the preceding two spells of six months each; and

(c) Government's reaction to the frequent air-violations by Pak Air Force aircrats?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) The details of such air violations indicate that there were 2 incidents of violations of Indian air-space by aircraft identified as those from Pakistan between 1st January to 30th June, 1997 as against 5 & 4 for the preceding two spells of six months each respectively.

(c) All the cases of air violations are taken-up appropriately, with the Government of Pakistan through diplomatic channels.

Officials Secrets Act

*115. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state whether the United Front Government have set-up a panel to submit a series of recommendations which are expected to make the Official Secrets Act less restrictive and Government functioning more transparent?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA): A Working Group on "Right to Information and Promotion of Open and Transparent Government" was set-up by the Central Government under the Chairmanship of Shri H.D. Shourie, Chairman Common Cause. The Group which submitted its report in May, 1997, has